United States
Department of
Agriculture

Soil
Conservation
service

Americus
Plant Materials
Center

Americus, Georgia

'GEORGIA 5' Tall Fescue

Festuca arundinacea

A cool-season forage grass for the Southern Coastal Plain and as a general purpose turfgrass in the tall fescue transition zone.

A joint release of U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and The University of Georgia Agricultural Experiment Stations.

September 1992

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

ECOLOGICAL SCIENCES DIVISION

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATIONS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

NOTICE OF RELEASE OF 'GEORGIA 5' TALL FESCUE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
AND
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

NOTICE OF RELEASE OF GEORGIA S TALL FESCUE

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, and The University of Georgia Agricultural Experiment Stations announces the release of 'GEORGIA 5' Tall Fescue, Festuca arundinacea Schreb.

GEORGIA 5 tall fescue is a 5 clone synthetic cultivar. The 5 parental clones originated from 21 clones collected by the USDA-SCS from stress areas throughout the eastern United States and maintained in the field at the Americus Plant Materials Center, Americus, Georgia for approximately 10 years. In 1977, the 9 best surviving plants were polycrossed at Athens, Georgia and their polycross progeny tested for survival and yield over 2 years in Americus. The 5 parental clones were then selected based on their polycross progeny performance. The syn 3 generation is defined as breeders seed and will be used to produce foundation (syn 4) and certified seed (syn 5).

The southern coastal plain region currently lacks a dependable, perennial cool season forage grass. When tested against the standard perennial, cool season species and other

endophyte-infected and endophyte-free tall fescue cutivars, Georgia 5 showed superior forage yield and persistence in clipped plots in this region. The endophyte-infected version of GEORGIA 5 is also greatly superior to its endophyte-free version in stressful areas. Its persistence is very evident when mixed with bermudagrass and bahiagrass and grazed. Animal gains indicated Georgia 5 to be useful for extensive winter maintenance grazing thereby giving the livestock producer an alternative to expensive hay and grain feeding. Its yield and persistence in the fescue growing region of northern Georgia was similar to other cultivars while its distribution of forage in this region is more similar to Kentucky 31 than AU Triumph.

Its turf performance and quality is similar to Kentucky 31 for non-stress environments. Based on pasture performance and Gainesville, Florida data its turf performance is expected to be superior to Kentucky 31 in areas of high temperature and water stress.

GEORGIA 5 is therefore being released to replace Kentucky 31 for use as winter maintenance pasture in mixtures with warm-season grasses in the Southern Coastal Plain and as a general purpose turfgrass in the tall fescue transition zone.

It is adapted to the southern coastal plain region of the southeastern United States (Gulf Coast area from southern Texas through southern Alabama, Georgia, the Carolinas, and northern

Florida) and low maintenance, stress areas of the transition zone (northern Mississippi through northern Georgia including Tennessee). It is wide-bladed and has medium early maturity with an average heading date 5 days earlier than 'Kentucky 31', but 7 days later than 'AU Triumph' at Athens, Georgia.

The 0.75 acre breeder block producing syn 3 seed is maintained at the Plant Science Farm near Watkinsville, GA. Since endophyte-infected seed has a short storage life, breeders seed will be produced from the breeders block on a yearly basis. This results every year in production of approximately 200 pounds of clean breeders seed. Currently 5 acres is in production in Oregon and 10 acres in Georgia.

An application has been made for Plant Variety Protection. Seed production and marketing rights were exclusively assigned by the Georgia Seed Development Commission to Pennington Seed Company, Madison, GA.

We gratefully acknowledge the plant breeding work conducted by Dr. Joe Bouton (breeder) and his staff during the development and testing of GEORGIA 5 and the entire staff of the Americus plant Materials Center.

RECOMMENDED BY

State Conservationist, Auburn, Alabama

State Conservationist, Columbia, South Carolina

State Conservationist Athens, Georgia
Chairman, Americus PMC Advisory Committee

APPROVED :

10-24-92

Director, Ecological Science Division
USDA - Soil Conservation Service
Washington, D.C.

RECOMMENDED **BY:**

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Origniating Scientist

B. David E. Kissel

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D. David E. Kissel

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